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## Joint News Release

Joint Public Relations Team

11:00 A.M., December 27, 2010

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## State battles wind, drifting snow in recovery efforts

*Some warnings cancelled; Wind Advisory in effect*

High winds and continued blowing snow are keeping much of the state in a catch-up mode as crews try to clear roads following a day and night of snow. Central and southern Delaware, particularly Sussex County, are still dealing with many secondary roads that have not been cleared yet, as well as with those roads that were cleared and have drifted over again.

Because of weather and road conditions, the limited State of Emergency with Level 1 Driving Warning remains in effect in Kent and Sussex counties. Under the Level 1 Driving Warning designation, drivers are discouraged from operating a motor vehicle on the state's roadways, unless there is a significant safety, health or business reason to do so. They may be issued a warning if it is not deemed necessary for them to be driving, but there is no fine or penalty imposed.

The National Weather Service (NWS) has lifted the Winter Storm Warning in New Castle and Kent counties and the Blizzard Warning in Sussex. According to the NWS, there may see some areas of the state that receive an inch or two of snow in bands this morning, but the threat for additional significant snow has diminished.

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However, NWS issued a Wind Advisory for the entire state that is in effect until 6 P.M. this evening. Sustained winds of 25 to 35 mph and gusts of 40 to 50 mph are predicted for the state.

Under these conditions, driving may be difficult, especially for high profile vehicles and on bridges and overpasses. Scattered power outages may result. Where there was a significant snowfall, considerable blowing and drifting of snow will occur, covering roadways and obscuring visibility. Loose and unsecured objects such as lawn furniture or yard ornaments may be blown about.

The Delaware Department of Transportation reports that the main focus is clearing primary and multi-lane roads, but crews frequently have to return to previously cleared roads to battle blowing and drifting snow. As weather conditions allow, attention will shift to secondary roads. Even in New Castle County where snow amounts are not as high as Central and Southern Delaware, most secondary roads are snow covered.

Debra Jones, spokesperson for Sussex County Emergency Operations Center, reported by email that "Road Conditions are Horrible at best. As soon as plows go down the road the wind is blowing snow back on them." Jones said those who must use the roads should do so with extreme caution because conditions are still hazardous.

The Sussex EOC Storm Hotline remains activated for residents seeking information on roads and weather. For updates and answers in Sussex, call 302-856-7366.

Many primary roads in Kent County are passable, but still have some snow cover. Most secondary roads are snow covered with large drifts in places. Because temperatures will remain well below freezing, there is the danger of roads throughout the state becoming progressively icier in the evening.

According to Delaware State Police, a few personal injury accidents have occurred, but all are minor. The number of disabled vehicles is growing as people venture out without realizing the seriousness of road conditions.

Due to winter storm and road conditions, State of Delaware closed offices in Kent and Sussex counties all day Monday, December 27. Non-essential employees who live or work in Kent and Sussex counties did not report to work during this period. Essential employees in Kent and Sussex counties were to report to work as scheduled.

State of Delaware offices in New Castle County opened at 10 a.m. Non-essential employees who live and work in New Castle County did not report until 10 a.m. Essential employees in New Castle County were to report to work as scheduled.

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The public is advised to monitor weather and road conditions throughout the day and to avoid travel if at all possible. Emergency management officials are concerned that wind conditions might contribute to power outages. The public should be prepared with flashlights, battery operated radios and warm clothing and bedding. Follow utility company websites as well as [www.Deldot.gov](http://www.Deldot.gov), [www.Delaware.gov](http://www.Delaware.gov), and [www.dema.delaware.gov](http://www.dema.delaware.gov) for current information.

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